

STATINTL

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# Missile Gap a Fiction--Dulles

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — John Edgar Hoover, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, said Wednesday the U.S. overestimated Russia's military intentions in the 1950s — and rumors of a missile and bomber "gap" were born.

Dulles denied in an article published Wednesday that such a gap ever existed between the Soviet Union and the U.S.

He thus confirmed Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara's denial in 1962 of a "missile gap," which was one of the major Democratic charges against the Eisenhower administration during the 1960 presidential campaign.

Writing in the April issue of Harper's Magazine, Dulles said the CIA, responding to "great pressure" from the Defense Department, produced projected Soviet missile production figures on the basis of their known capabilities.

But the CIA could only make an educated guess, Dulles said, of how fast the Russians would produce missiles and bombers.

The answer, in retrospect, was that the Russians decided to develop intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) at a slower, more orderly rate instead of rushing their awkward, early-model ICBMs to launching pads, Dulles said.

When evidence of this appeared, Dulles added, the CIA quickly lowered its estimates. The same was true of the apparent Soviet decision in 1957 to limit heavy-bomber production drastically.

"In this case, it was possibly fortunate that we erred on the side of overestimating the opponent," Dulles wrote. "All of this intelligence spurred us to press forward with our own missile programs."

Dulles, who retired in 1962 after eight years as chief of the CIA, said the agency's ear-

ly estimates were based on "certain proven capabilities of the Soviet Union on our view of their intentions and overall strategy."

The CIA would be "lost in a forest of uncertainty" if it tried to forecast U.S. policy decisions in the future, Dulles said. Yet the CIA's experts are asked to predict the same decisions by other countries.

"Unfortunately, the intelligence process of making estimates will never become an exact science," Dulles said.

His magazine article, "The Craft of Intelligence," was

based on another article he wrote for the Encyclopaedia Britannica 1963 Book of the

Year. An expanded version will be published in regular book form in the fall.



DULLES